
USCG PORT STATE CONTROL

MARINE SAFETY OFFICE MOBILE

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Welcome to Our Port

A note from the Chief of Port State Control

Lieutenant Zane Price

On behalf of our crew I would like to welcome you to our port. My team of eight inspectors and boarding officers inspect all foreign flagged vessels calling on Gulf Coast ports from Pensacola, Florida to Gulfport, Mississippi.

Our mission is threefold. Our primary concern is the safety of you and your crew. We thoroughly inspect all lifesaving and fire fighting appliances so that if the unfortunate need to use them arises, they will operate properly. Secondly, we ensure the safety of our environment by carefully inspecting the oily water separator and all other appliances designed to prevent oil and other types of pollution. Finally, we examine your vessel to determine if it is a hazard to the waterways of the United States. We do this by inspecting your vessel's navigation equipment and hull condition.

We hope that you will strive to maintain a safe working environment. Enjoy your port time!

Top Ten Discrepancies Noted on Ships

A list of items to double check while in port

Petty Officer Harry March

To better assist you with future Coast Guard inspections, we have compiled a list of the top ten discrepancies discovered on vessels in our port. We recommend you check the following carefully. The Coast Guard considers all of these detainable discrepancies:

- 1) Failure to conduct a proper fire drill;
- 2) Failure to conduct a proper abandon ship drill;
- 3) Excessive oil in the engineroom bilges;
- 4) Inoperable emergency fire pump;

- 5) Deteriorated sea water piping/soft patches present;
- 6) Lack of maintenance of lifesaving equipment;
- 7) Inoperable oily water separator;
- 8) Inoperable electronic navigation equipment;
- 9) Deteriorated ventilation closures; and
- 10) Lack of maintenance of fire fighting equipment.

A Coast Guard Exam

A brief look at what we do on board freight vessels

Lieutenant (junior grade) Eric Roan

The type of examination we conduct on board a vessel depends on a combination of factors. One of the key factors is the length of time since the vessel's last annual examination. We conduct an annual examination on all vessels that are calling on a U.S. port for the first time. The annual examination is the most extensive examination performed by the Coast Guard. It starts with a thorough check of the vessel's certificates, documents, and certain manuals and officers' licenses. The next phase of the exam includes operational tests on the bridge navigation equipment, steering gear, emergency fire pump, emergency source of electrical power, oily water separator, and many other shipboard devices. We will also witness fire and abandon ship drills at the conclusion of the exam.

The other major exam we conduct is called a Document Check. A ship registered under certain flags will undergo this exam no less than six months after its previous annual exam. Like its name suggests, this exam is much more oriented to vessel and crew paperwork; however, the boarding officer will conduct a general exam of the vessel to ensure no major safety hazards are present.



Online with the Coast Guard

MSO Mobile is now on the Web

Petty Officer Harry March

To better serve our customers, we have created a page on the Internet (<http://www.uscg.mil/d8/mso/mobile>). Among the wealth of information available to you is the form we use to conduct our inspections and a list of certificates and manuals we examine. Hopefully, your honoring this information in advance of our boarding will help prepare and expedite the examination process.

Fire Drills: What the Coast Guard Wants to See

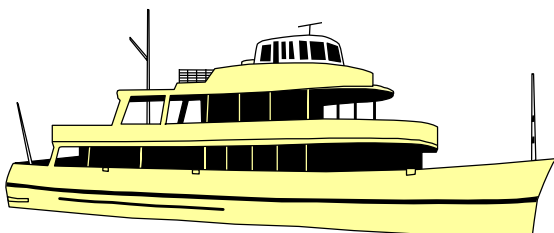
How to pass the first time

Petty Officer Harry March

When a crew conducts a fire drill, the Coast Guard wants to see several specific actions. Included among them are:

- 1) Proper notification of the fire's location to the Captain;
- 2) Securing of the power and ventilation systems serving the location of the fire;
- 3) Reporting of at least two men in proper fireman's outfits to the scene of the fire within ten minutes; and
- 4) Proper fire fighting skills and techniques by the ship's crew.

The Coast Guard may pick any space to conduct the fire drill. Once we select a space, we will randomly pick a crewmember and question him or her about the theory and various methods of fire fighting. When he or she has satisfactorily answered our questions, we will start the drill. Remember that failure of a fire drill is a detainable issue. We strongly encourage captains to properly train their crews. Most of our detentions are due to the failure of fire or abandon ship drills.



Mishaps

Stop problems before they occur

Lieutenant (junior grade) Eric Roan and Petty Officer Alan Perander

During a recent examination on board a freight ship, the Coast Guard witnessed an abandon ship drill. After the crew satisfactorily completed the drill, they started raising the lifeboat to its cradle by means of an electrical winch. When the boat was half way between the main deck and the water, the circuit serving the winch tripped. Moments later, the crew continued to raise the lifeboat manually with a steel crank inserted into the winch. Apparently, it was during this time that the vessel's electrician restored the circuit serving the winch. The electric winch activated, throwing the steel bar out of its slot, bouncing off the nearby deck and bulkheads. Fortunately, no one was killed during the incident, but the seaman handling the winch broke his arm.

Please, remember the person in charge of the drill must remain aware of all possible operational dangers. Never insert the manual crank into the lifeboat winch unless two or more people verify the local power switch is secured.

The Coast Guard diffused a potentially hazardous situation on board another vessel by detaining it when the inspector found evidence leading him to believe the Captain was intoxicated. A blood alcohol test performed at a local hospital confirmed that the Captain's blood-alcohol content was almost seven times the legal limit. The Coast Guard detained the vessel under the provisions of the STCW Convention, the port's first detention under that convention.

No crewmember may perform the duties required of him on board a ship if his or her blood-alcohol content exceeds .04. You can find the regulations regarding intoxication of a crewmember in Title 33 Code of Federal Regulations Section 95.

Please send all questions and comments to:

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